

GUIDELINE B-5
(formerly 15-06)

Drinking Water Quality

Legislative Authority:

Ontario Water Resources Act

Responsible Director:

Director, Program Development Branch

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SYNOPSIS

This guideline and the associated Procedure B-5-1: "Ontario Drinking Water Objectives (ODWO)" deal with the protection and enhancement of drinking water quality, and are intended to protect public health and encourage the provision of aesthetically pleasing water.

Detailed information on the objectives is contained in the Ministry's Procedure B-1-1 entitled "Water Management -- Guidelines and Procedures of the Ministry of Environment and Energy ("The Blue Book") and B-1-2: "Revised Tables of Objectives for Ministry of Environment and Energy's Publication "Water Management"".

The quality of drinking water shall conform to the limits described in Procedure B-5-1: "Ontario Drinking Water Objectives" except where indicated otherwise. Where the quality of drinking water is within provincial limits, every effort shall be made to maintain or improve that quality.

1.0 Definitions

Maximum Acceptable Concentration (MAC):

Limits applied to substances above which there are known or suspected adverse health effects.

Interim Maximum Acceptable Concentration (IMAC):

A health-related objective established for parameters for which there is insufficient toxicological data to establish a MAC with reasonable certainty. When it is not feasible for practical reasons to establish a MAC at a desired level, an IMAC may be established at an achievable level.

Maximum Desirable Concentration (MDC):

Limits on substances which, when present at concentrations above the limits, are either

aesthetically objectionable to an appreciable number of consumers or may interfere with good water quality control practices.

2.0 Guideline Statements

2.1 Source Protection and Treatment

All drinking water systems shall have acceptable source protection and treatment processes to ensure that the appropriate limits for drinking water are met.

2.2 Sampling and Monitoring

Adequate sampling and monitoring programs are to be undertaken for chemical, physical, radiological and microbiological parameters, to ensure compliance with required water quality criteria (see Procedure B-5-1).

2.3 Non-Compliance

Whenever adverse sampling or monitoring results are encountered, appropriate response procedures are to be followed.

2.4 Notices

Drinking Water Notices will be issued, as required, to clarify or otherwise give notice of revisions to the Ontario Drinking Water Objectives document and its related guidelines and procedures.

3.0 Additional Guidance

Details on the above guideline statements may be found in Procedure B-1-2: "Revised Tables of Objectives for Ministry of Environment and Energy's Publication "Water Management"".